

REMARKS

The Office Action dated March 23, 2005, and the patents cited therein have been carefully reviewed, and in view of the above changes and following remarks reconsideration and allowance of all the claims pending in the application are respectfully requested.

The Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) Over Lei

Claims 1-17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Lei, U.S. Patent No. 5,729,418.

Applicant has amended claim 1 to include the subject matter contained in claim 2, and claim 2 has been accordingly cancelled. Claim 6 has been amended to improve its form in accordance with U.S. patent law by adding the article "the" in line 13 of claim 6.

Applicant respectfully submits that the present invention according to any of claims 1 and 3-17 is patentable over Lei. Applicant respectfully submits that the applied patent is not properly modifiable to form a basis for rejection of these claims. Moreover, the device resulting from the proposed modification is not the present invention.

Contrary to the Examiner's characterization of Lei, Lei does not disclose that "when a voltage above a selected value is reached between the terminals, the signal path switches to a high impedance, with only a constant a [sic] bias current flowing thru the control path and each end terminal" (See Office Action dated 03/23/2005, page 2, lines 17-20.) Instead, Lei discloses that a variable-resistance means generates a high resistance level to limit current flow to a minimum level between the two terminals when a predetermined maximum voltage level

across the two terminals is exceeded. (See Lei, Abstract, lines 8-11; column 1, line 2; column 2, lines 43-49; column 3, lines 5-9, 23-26, 39-43, and 49-54; column 4, lines 49-53; column 5, lines 1-2; column 6, lines 27-30 and 63-67; column 7, lines 55-60, column 8, lines 6-10; column 9, lines 5-9, 13-15 and 29-33; and column 10, lines 1-5.)

Even though Lei discloses that when device J1 and transistors M1 and M2 are turned off, the only current path through the terminals A and B is the series path through R1, D1, D2 and R2, and that the only current passing through circuit 20 is biasing current, Applicant respectfully submits that Lei does not disclose or suggest that the biasing current passing through circuit 20 when device J1 and transistors M1 and M2 are turned off is a substantially constant current. In fact, the word "constant" is not used at all by Lei. Figure 5 of Lei plainly shows that as the input voltage increases beyond V_{trip} , the current linearly increases as a function of the voltage increase. (See Lei, column 5, lines 58-62, and Figure 5.)

Further still, Applicant respectfully submits that even in view of the Examiner's opinion regarding a minimum low voltage for which the Lei device needs for operating, such a consideration does not result in the biasing current passing through circuit 20 when device J1 and transistors M1 and M2 are turned off to be a substantially constant current, as required by each of independent claims 1 and 6. Claim 14 similarly requires a substantially constant-current operating mode.

Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that each of claims 1, 6 and 14 is allowable over Lei. It follows that each of claims 3-5, 7-13 and 15-17, which incorporate the limitations of their

respective base claim, is allowable over Lei for at least the same reasons that their respective base claims are considered allowable.

Consequently, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw this rejection and allow claims 1 and 3-17.

Newly Added Claims

Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner enter claims 18-20. Support for newly added claims 18-20 can be found in the Figure 10.

Applicant respectfully submits that newly added claims 18-20 are each patentable over Lei for at least the same reasons that their respective base claims, i.e., claims 1, 6 and 14, are considered patentable over Lei. Additionally, both claims 18 and 19 are patentable over Lei for the additional reason that Lei does not disclose or suggest a current limiter device that includes a signal path that has a non-linearity of about less than or equal to 0.3 % for about a 1 Volt input signal. Regarding claim 20, Lei does not disclose or suggest a current limiter device that includes a current limiter circuit that has a non-linearity of about less than or equal to 0.3 % for about a 1 Volt input signal when the current limiter circuit is operating in the substantially constant-resistance operating mode.

Thus, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to allow newly added claims 18-20.

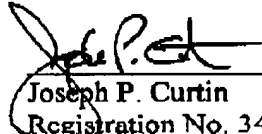
CONCLUSION

In view of the above amendments and arguments, it is urged that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner find that a telephonic or personal interview would expedite passage to issue of the present application, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

It is requested that this application be passed to issue with claims 1 and 3-20.

Respectfully submitted,

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